

PART 4.

Third
Series

APRIL,

1889.

VOL
1

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM
YEAR TO YEAR."

All the Year Round
a
Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

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CHARLES DICKENS.

No. 14.—THIRD SERIES.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1889.

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LOUIS DRAYCOTT.

By MRS. R. S. DE COURCY LAFFAN.
Author of "Geoffrey Stirling," etc. etc.

BOOK II.

HOW THE STORY WENT ON.

THE REVEREND LOUIS DRAYCOTT'S DIARY.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

DECEMBER the thirty-first, 1879.—The last day of what has been to me a most eventful year. An eventful and exciting day, too, in itself. The sort of day that takes it out of a fellow—especially a fellow like me. It is odd how I seem to get inside these queer folk, among whom my lot and work is cast, and to be conscious of exactly what they are feeling; how all the side-lights play upon their lives for me, so that each separate life becomes a sort of drama, of which I am the witness—a witness so deeply concerned, that it seems to be all happening to myself.

Even now, through the hazy smoke of my pipe, I see the face of that poor fellow, John Mogridge, as he watched his wife out of sight; the spasm that caught the muscles of his mouth; the clenched fists; the strangled cry through the set teeth; and then the bitter, bitter burst of weeping!

After all, how little the people who read newspaper reports of "cases"—murder and otherwise—can judge of the real state of matters! How little they can follow the tortuous windings; how little estimate the buffettings of storm, and wind, and tempest, through which the culprit has reached that

summit of misfortune, where he becomes visible to the prying eyes of his fellows! It is the man whose calling sets him—not above—but side by side with the sinner, in the supreme hours of retribution and despair, who can see things as they are—not as they seem to be.

The stream of one life runs quietly through pleasant pastures, between gently-sloping banks, and its current is clear, and calm, and still. Another foams along a rocky bed, beating madly against this obstacle and that; here swirling in giddy eddies above some gruesome depth; there compressed to a torrent by a narrowed channel, and hidden from the light of day by overhanging banks dense with poisonous flower and berry, and foul with blackened ooze, and iridescent slime.

As I write, two lives, marvellous in their sharp contrast, rise up before me.

First, there is old David Bramble, whom I visited the day before yesterday. He has been gate-keeper at the prison for so many years, that it makes one giddy to think of the endless procession of criminals he must have seen passing and re-passing that gloomy portal. He married, in early youth, a wise and faithful woman, who bore him healthy and good children, and died, at the age of sixty-five, crowned with every household virtue. David is now in his eighty-third year. His hair is snow-white, fine-spun, and falls on either side a face where grand and noble lines are graven. When I go to visit him, and ask him how things are with him, he answers me that he is "Easy, sir, easy." He is conscious of no pain; can listen to his little blue-eyed grand-daughter Tottie spell her way through a chapter in the Testament, or the newspaper, with content to

himself; enjoys his meals; and is now—so he tells me—looking forward to the “early cabbage” of spring—a favourite dainty.

With that charming candour so characteristic of their class, his family speak openly, in his presence, of his probable dissolution, and its probable kind. “He’ll go off suddint, at last, will father—like the snuff of a candle,” says the son George, who now keeps the gate. They always ask me to “say a bit of prayer with father;” and I do so. But I do not ask of Heaven that the old man may soon be “taken,” nor yet that he may quickly “enter into his rest.” I think he is very comfortable where he is, and earnestly hope he may be spared to enjoy those spring pleasures, upon which his honest old heart is set. When death comes, I doubt not, David will meet it with trust and courage; none the less so because he has enjoyed the gift of a long and prosperous life more than most.

From David Bramble to John Mogeridge is a long stretch—to some, doubtless, so long that they would never reach the other side. Imagination would fail them. The life, blackened by the worst of crimes, and ended by John Mogeridge, private in Her Majesty’s one hundred and fiftieth Regiment of the Line, being “hanged by the neck till he was dead,” would cause a shudder. The sensitive mind would shrink from the contemplation of such a spectacle. Even a man of very smirched life would shrink from John Mogeridge.

But I—knowing what I do of the life that has just gone out in darkness—I, who saw the tears of penitence upon the swarthy cheek, and heard the sighs that rent the breast of the sinner; I, who, learning more and more of the man’s temptations and troubles in my daily ministry; I, who traced the stormy course of a life which had had every adverse and sinister influence brought to bear upon it—I, Louis Draycott, gaol chaplain, feel differently.

It was not a very new or startling story, that of John Mogeridge. A drunken father, a dissolute mother, evil tendencies inherited, the “sins of the fathers visited on the children”—the old law that may seem unjust, but that is inexorable, and has its beautiful side and teaching, like all Heaven’s laws; for what so beautiful a thought, what so grand a prize to strive for, as the knowledge that by bringing ourselves into subjection, that by ourselves becoming manly, pure, and true, we may bequeath a heritage of bodily and

mental strength and health to those that shall come after! Evil tendencies are not the only tendencies that are immortal things, thank Heaven!

In the case of John Mogeridge, the evil bequeathed to him was mighty; the good, nil. He had to make the good side of his life for himself; and it was weaker than the bad side. When he “took the shilling,” he came across a bad companion, and got led astray. He took to “taking a glass too much,” which means many glasses. He saw the red rims round his wife’s eyes, but would not be warned by those home danger-signals.

He sold his kit; he sold the child’s shoes; just then he would have sold his soul for drink. The lurking demon in him was rampant. The selling of the little shoes was a domestic treachery of the blackest, and the red rims grew deeper, and the wife’s cheek sodden and pale.

The selling of the “kit” was another matter. It brought heavy and disgraceful punishment upon him. A few years back it would have brought him to the triangle, and scored his back with the livid ridges which the “cat” leaves as it passes. But these are more merciful days.

Still, Mogeridge suffered severely for his “spree,” and the blacking-brushes, and other items—all marked with the broad arrow—which had been found at the sign of the three balls. His state was bad; but not hopeless, since he still hated his own wrongdoing. It is when a man can think of his sins against himself, and others, with complacency, that hope languishes. He resolved to gather himself together and make a stand for the right. He determined to wipe away the red rims from his wife’s eyes with the hand of love and penitence.

But he found himself a “marked man.” A non-commissioned officer, smart, active, without human sympathies, incapable of gentle dealing with any, had come to great power in the company to which Mogeridge belonged. The Captain left everything to this man.

John Mogeridge had a hot time of it. He strove to do better, but his strivings were as those of one who fights with the air. The Sergeant would not permit the once-fallen man to rise. Nothing he did was right. Everything was wrong. His comrades jeered at him. Flunkeyism finds itself everywhere, from the Court to the slum. The men recognised their Captain as a “fainéant;” his Sergeant as a person that it were well to propitiate.

Mogeridge was "reported" for the most venial fault. On one occasion feeling ill upon the march, he asked leave to fall out. It was refused him. He staggered on, blind and dazed ; the cold sweat beading on his forehead ; his shako seemed a leaden weight, his stock strangled him ; rebellious and evil thoughts began to surge and bubble in his mind. Hate—that father of murder—ran riot in his heart.

Later on he sought consolation at the canteen. Presently the drink clouded his poor brain, and, at the same time, fired his blood.

" You look like as if yo' wur after no good, John Mogeridge," said a passing comrade, noting the bloodshot eyes and unsteady gait of the "marked man."

It seemed as though the wicked fancies surging within him clothed themselves in the man's scoffing words, taking visible and concrete form and shape : " No good" —was that what he was after ?

Thirst for revenge raged in his soul, as thirst for the beer in his body. He visited the canteen again ; again he met with jeers and scoffing.

" Art 'er bound fur to kill some one ?" said a man leaning up against the door, pipe in hand, tunic unbuttoned, and forage-cap on the back of his head. " You look like it."

The words were carelessly spoken, and raised a laugh ; but again they clothed a thought, giving it form and semblance.

" To kill"—an awful thought ! The sweat breaks forth afresh upon his brow—a mist rises between his blurred vision and the world around it. Through it he sees his wife's face with the red rims round her eyes, and the children—Bobby always in trouble, and having to be slapped, but a bright and sturdy chap for all that ; and the baby, sleeping as he had seen it last, with its little hand laid against the mother's breast.

Shall he go to them and kiss them one and all—for the last, last time ?

He will not be fit to kiss them when next he sees them. Bessy herself will turn from him, and cower over the children to keep them from his touch.

No, she won't ; she'll cling about his neck, laying the baby down to set her arms free first. She'll weep fit to break her heart.

Who talks of broken hearts ? What does an odd one or so cracked, or even crushed to powder, matter ?

Why should he, John Mogeridge, be

trampled upon as he is ? Why should he not make them feel that he has some power left—that, like the insect beaten to the earth, he yet can sting ?

He goes home ; he finds the poor place Government is kind enough to call married quarters for one family, empty.

If only Bessy had chanced to be there, or even Bobby, happy in some atrocious delight of his own invention, just to catch Daddy by the leg, just to appeal, with little dirty hands, and begrimed yet laughing face, to the better nature, wholly dormant in the man, and overborne by the rampant lust of vengeance, and the instincts of the beast within him !

There is no word in all the English language so pregnant as that word "if." It takes only two letters to make it ; it is easy to spell, and small to look at ; but the chances or mis-chances of a lifetime may lie folded up in it.

" If" Bessy or Bobby had been there, things might have gone differently with John Mogeridge. As it was——

But here the poor fellow's own words rise to my memory, almost with an actual sound :

" I hardly knowed what I wanted, nor what I was after, till I saw my rifle lying handy——"

He lifted the weapon that thus came "handy" to the evil running riot within him ; toyed with it ; weighed it in his hands, as though it had been a friend of whom he sought to take counsel ; then, slowly and deliberately, loaded it with ball.

He had still no fixed resolve, no absolutely settled design. The mist was still before his eyes—a shadowy thing, clouding and blurring his brain as well as his vision.

All the bad and cruel instincts, all the violent, uncontrollable passions which had been bequeathed to him along with the gift of life, flamed in his heart and in his blood.

What a picture, seen through the half-opened door—this man, with glazed and staring eyes, trembling hands, and face of ghastly pallor, wavering on the brink of crime—pushed by unseen hands towards the black gulf yawning at his feet !

Again his own words come to my mind—a voice from the dead :

" I didna' know what I wanted, Parson ; but it wur summat, and it wur no good."

A moment more, and the lazy Captain—the man who left all the company's work

to his Colour-sergeant — came strolling across the square. He whistled softly as he went. He carried his sword under his arm, and had pushed his forage-cap to the back of his head, for the day was warm.

A slight noise caught his ear, and he turned, with a smile upon his face, towards the open door whence it came. Then, almost as he turned, he leapt near a foot into the air, and fell with a heavy thud, face downwards, on the stones.

When the guard rushed across to arrest Private John Mogeridge, the man stood, looking at his rifle that lay upon the ground — with the barrel still faintly smoking — trembling in every limb, and sobbing like a woman.

"I never seemed to know what I'd done, till I saw 'em lift 'im up, and 's po'r head fell back across the Sergeant's knee, so helpless-like. I knowed then—I knowed then—"

The choking, broken utterance of these words ; the sobs that cut the words in two at last ; the awful, despairing face of the man as he fell upon his knees ; and I beside him, sobbing too.

What a memory it all is! . . . And now it is all over and done with—folded up as one might fold a garment and lay it by! And victim and murderer are both with God.

Best so ; best so. For He alone can hold the balance justly, weighing all things. . . . It was beautiful that the mother of the murdered man should write a letter of pardon to John Mogeridge just before, in the cold, grey dawn of the year's last day, he paid the penalty of the old, old law—"a life for a life."

Such a letter, too ! So tender, so pitiful ; taking exquisite cognisance of the heart-broken penitence of the sinner, of which I had told her. It seemed to me a sacramental gift, that letter, as I laid it in the sin-soiled hand ; something that held the gift of healing, as of old the touch of the Master's garment. How blurred it was with the murderer's tears ; how crumpled with the kisses that he showered upon it ; how snug it lay, wrapped in a handkerchief Bessy had given him, tucked into the bosom of his shirt, ere he set out on that last terrible march of his—from the cell to the scaffold ! . . .

It is all over now ; it will pass like the rest. After all, it is only part and parcel of the day's work that comes to one whose simple duty it is to minister to others.

As the jetsam and flotsam of this tur-

bulent sea of sorrow and pain, this storm of sin, and penitence, and death, I find Bessy and little Bobby : the former dazed and dumb with the weight of her anguish ; the latter, full of inconvenient and urgent wonder as to "what has come of Daddy."

Good and charitable people have sent me various sums of money for the widow and children of John Mogeridge ; so that want will not be added to sorrow. Bobby already rejoices in a new pair of boots, coming very high up the legs, and conferring much dignity on his small person, and has been three times turned back from tentative journeys to find Daddy and show him Bobby's "pitty noo boots."

I think Bobby's babble hurts Bessy cruelly now ; but, like many another cross of thorns, it will bud, and blossom, and turn to flowers with time. I shall watch for the first smile that touches her poor, pale lips, evoked by some irresistible drollery on the part of the boy. That smile will be the first rift in her night of cloud and pain. So, even Bobby has his uses, though when he poked a hole in the end of the kettle-drum and was discovered with one eye glued to the aperture and the other screwed up close so as to give him a first-class focus, I have been told that the big drummer—autocratic sovereign over all the drums, great and small, magnificent in uniform and wrath—denounced him as a "useless varmint, as didn't never ought to have been set a-goin'."

Bobby said, with gulps, and chokes, and many bitter tears, that he was "Looking for the noise ;" but I never heard if the drummer was mollified by this view of the case.

Perhaps, in spite of the drummer's verdict, Bobby is having his uses now.

Perhaps I am glad to write about him in this my journal, my sole friend and confidant, just because he is a point of light in the universal gloom. I suppose one must feel wretched and sore after such a time as I have passed through of late. At all events, my nerves must have suffered somewhat in the process ; for, whichever way I look, I meet the eyes of Private John Mogeridge as they met mine, just as the hand of the executioner was drawing the white cap across their light ; putting it out for ever. The lips—last seen of all the set and grey-white face—moved, though no sound escaped them.

Yet I knew—I said "Amen." "God be merciful to me a sinner," was the

prayer heard of God, though not of man, in that supreme and awful moment.

Rather would I say :

"God be merciful to us all sinners!" and cry "Amen," with bowed head and covered face. My own record-sheet is not so clean that I can afford to separate myself and stand aloof from the man who died this morning, in the early dawn of the year's last day. For hate takes many forms, and killing does not always stand in need of knife, or poison-cup, to make it murder.

Louis Draycott, why are you "harking back" like this, instead of looking straight before you? It is against all rule; it is a breach of contract—with yourself. I suppose it is the worn-out feeling that follows a long-continued strain that makes me inclined to be morbid to-night, and to take to looking back into the grave, sad faces of past sorrows. These rooms of mine, though the matron is inconceivably respectable, are certainly not lively; nor can a blank wall be regarded as a cheerful prospect, even when a tank and a withered specimen of the ivy plant are thrown in. I suppose I might inhabit pleasanter rooms; but these had an odd sort of attraction for me. I like to see the prison itself looming big and dark all round me. It is having one's work handy. I like to think of all the mass of sin and sorrow hidden there, and—perhaps I cheat myself in this—fancy that my own suffering has taught me the trick of tenderness towards the sufferings of others; that my own miserable failure in the day of trial has taught me gentleness towards the failures of others.

These things may be so, or may not. I can but toil and hope. I can but pray that they may be so.

But to-night I am out of sorts—unhinged—physically weak. I need a mental tonic of some sort. Perhaps I had better take Ella's letter. Let me see—what is it she says?

"I know your dislike to making new acquaintances—nay, even to keeping up old ones; but in this case, I do think, my dear brother, you might make an exception."

"In this case"—that means in the case of these people of the name of Birt, who live in an out-of-the-way suburb of London—"Miss Birt was so good to 'dearest Janey,' when she had her bad accident at Weston-super-Mare, and I promised you should call."

So, because Miss Birt was good to Janey (is the lady eighty or eighteen?), Ella

promises and vows strange things in my name; and I am to break into my rule of life, attire myself in the best mode I can, and present myself at Prospect Place, N.W. "You are expected," says Ella, further on.

Well—I will go.

And for this reason. If this lady—be she old, or young, or middle-aged—was "so good" to heedless Janey when she slipped on a round stone on the shore and put her precious ankle out, she, the lady, must have a kind heart.

Now I want some woman with a kind heart to take an interest in Bessy and little Bob. There are sorrows that need a more delicate hand than mine to assuage their bitterness; and women understand each other's griefs better than any man can ever do. I argue thus—if the said Miss Birt was "so good" to "dearest Janey," ergo, she will have it in her to be "so good" to Bessy and Bob.

At all events, I cannot begin the new year better than by calling upon such a paragon.

There—it is begun already; and solemn enough sounds each stroke of midnight as it rings out over the great city.

We know what the year that has passed has brought us; but it calls for a deeper faith to lay the year that is coming at God's feet, and say: "Do with me as Thou wilt—only forsake me not . . ."

TELEGRAPHY IN CHINA.

Of those home readers who, at the beginning of this decade, took a kindly interest in the opening of telegraph lines in China, only a very few were vaguely conscious of the existence of any difficulty other than the obstinate Conservatism of the Chinese authorities and people. If the Peking Government would but approve of telegraphs in principle, or better, would decide to construct a telegraph line for their own convenience, it was felt that the only other apparent obstacle—the fear with which the country folk regarded the intrusion of mysterious posts and wires among their graves and fields, and the prejudices of the bigoted "*lettres*" against anything of foreign origin—would soon disappear or be suppressed. It was hardly imagined that, when wires and posts were ready, and batteries and operators in position, there would be any trouble in transmitting a Chinese message. In China,

however, among the foreigners to whose energy and perseverance the introduction of the telegraph into that very backward and exclusive country was due, the intrinsic difficulties of this performance had long been sorrowfully admitted, and laborious preparations made to circumvent them.

The "fons et origo mali," in this case, was the fact that the Chinese language has no alphabet; has, indeed, scarcely advanced beyond the picture-writing which we, in the West, abandoned some three thousand years ago. To this day a Chinaman, who wishes to write the word for "sun," has no other resource but to draw what is, in effect, a picture of it, thus,

The forty or fifty thousand words  that go to make up the Chinese language are not, however, all written on this simple principle. By far the larger portion of them are made up of two elements—one of which consists of a symbol, or rude picture (such as the above) of the genus to which the word belongs, the other of a character giving (in many cases only approximately) the sound.

The first element is called, by foreign writers on the subject, the "radical;" the second, the "phonetic." Of these radicals there were once five hundred and forty-four, and there are still the sufficiently appalling number of two hundred and fourteen; while sinologues recognise no fewer than one thousand and forty phonetics.

Now it will be at once clear that no system of telegraphing could possibly undertake to provide two hundred and fourteen plus one thousand and forty, or one thousand two hundred and fifty-four distinct signs, independently of the fact that, in some cases, it makes all the difference whether the phonetic precedes or follows the radical, or is written above or below it. It never was, as far as I am aware, ever seriously proposed to use so cumbrous a system. An analogous method, however, was once gravely suggested. Although the Chinese characters are arranged under one or other of these two hundred and fourteen radicals, still, in the writing, they require, by native computation, only nine different kinds of strokes; and in any given character these strokes are—barring private fads on the writer's part—always written in the same order, just as a child, in forming the letter "a," is taught to make the "o" first and the pot-hook afterwards. To take as an example the character for "sun," given

above. It is written in four strokes: first the perpendicular line on the left, then the right-angled hook forming the top and right sides, then the central horizontal line, and lastly, the line at the base.

Dr. Macgowan, as early as 1851, proposed to have a dial-plate constructed marking the nine strokes, and to spell out each character stroke by stroke. If those original nine strokes were represented by a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, then the character for sun would be telegraphed "fob." The difficulties in the way, however, were first, that the succession of strokes in all characters is not as easy as in this particular one; and secondly, that, as a character may contain any number of strokes from one to forty, an average of some fifteen or sixteen strokes would have to be indicated on the dial-plate for every Chinese word transmitted. Those, it is needless to say, were the days before the Morse system of expressing letters by dots and dashes had replaced the old dial.

But, it will be objected, if, as you say, every Chinese character has its sound, why should not such sound be represented according to the Roman alphabet, and so transmitted? Transliterate, and your difficulty should vanish. But it only begins. This same character for "sun" is read in Peking, "zih;" in Shanghai, "nih;" in Central China, "i;" in Amoy, "jit;" in Canton, "yat." It forms the Chinese and Japanese symbol for the first syllable of Japan, where it is properly read "Ni," or "Nip." How, then, could a Pekingese, who should Romanise his sound for the picture "sun," into "zih," hope to be understood by a Cantonese, who pronounced it "yat"?

Every official in the empire, however, speaks a "lingua franca," which occupies much the same place in China, as compared to the local patois, as the so-called "Tuscan dialect" does, or did, in Italy. This "lingua franca" we foreigners call "mandarin," the natives, "kuan hua." Could not advantage be taken of this fact? Very possibly, in good time; but at present there are numerous stumbling-blocks.

An enthusiastic advocate of telegraphy by transliteration, writes in the "Chinese Recorder" of November, 1887, that, "the only practicable solution to the question: 'How can China inaugurate a new and practical system of telegraphy?' is by the Romanisation of her official dialect."

But quite apart from the fact that "zih" is good "mandarin" for the "sun" in

Peking and "i" in Canton, there is one terrible fact to be borne in mind. The Chinese written language contains upwards of forty-four thousand different symbols, though, for most purposes, seven thousand or eight thousand are more than ample, and five thousand suffice for ordinary use.

But in the official dialect of Peking there are only four hundred and twenty distinct sounds; and for "mandarin" generally, Dr. Williams—the great authority on these points—declares that "the actual number of syllables to be written with our letters, is four hundred and sixty, and of these, several are indistinguishable." If then we take four hundred and fifty as the number of separate sounds, and confine ourselves to the five thousand ordinary characters, it is clear that each sound will have to do duty for eleven characters on an average.

It is true that the Chinese have a system of tones whereby they contrive to distinguish between, for instance, "shih" (to lose); "shih" (an affair); and "shih" (the time); but, in Pekingese, there are only four of these, and in "Southern Mandarin" only five, so that the addition of letters to discriminate these, as "shihv," "shiy," or "shihw," though undoubtedly a step in the right direction, would obviously not afford a sufficient distinction.

The enthusiast of the "Chinese Recorder," however, makes his whole proposition ridiculous by advocating "the dropping of the tone marks, which for this purpose are not only unnecessary, but an incumbrance." Anyway, as I have said already, the Chinese are not ripe for this system yet; though I believe it, or something like it, may well be adopted in the future.

Nor are they prepared for the next most sweeping alternative; that they (the whole nation, mind you) should "learn English before they can use the telegraph." English is spoken by every foreigner in China, except a few Catholic Missionaries, and here and there a Frenchman or two (for a Frenchman will not willingly drop his fixed idea of the universal obligation to speak French). And there is an ever-increasing number of Chinese who speak it, usually in "pidgin" form, but of late years often idiomatically. Still these last are as but a drop in the ocean of Chinamen, who know no language but their own; and of the native officials, who chiefly use the telegraph now, not one in a thousand knows a word of English—and the thousandth is half ashamed of his acquisition.

How do the Chinese, themselves, spell? Is there no native method of spelling words which might be availed of for transmitting sounds without using the objectionable foreign characters? There is; by taking two known words to give the sound of an unknown third. Thus, supposing the sound of the English word "fen" to be found. If the pronunciation of the words "foe" and "ten" were known, "fen" would be given as "foe-ten;" the initial of the one and the final of the other being combined into a new sound. It would be unnecessary, of course, to use more than one character for each initial, or final. Of initials in the Pekingese dialect there are twenty-five, and of finals, forty-three, so that it was suggested (by Doctor Hobson) that by means of twenty-five plus forty-three, that is sixty-eight, characters it would be possible to telegraph altogether in Chinese. But the process, though, as conforming to a native system, it would be more easily understood and used by the Chinese, has many objections which it would be tedious to discuss here.

The Comte d'Escayrac de Lauture advocated, in 1862, the most ingenious system till then proposed. He based it upon the fact, that Chinese is written by means of symbols, which symbols have no inherent, or necessary sound. To bring up again the much-enduring character for "sun." If the nations generally regarded this as the emblem, or symbol, of the Sun, it would be universally understood, though in Paris it would be read "soleil," and in Peking "zhih." An actual case in point is the first of our numerals, 1 or I. This is recognised all the world over as meaning unity, though a German would read it "ein," and a Spaniard "un." Consequently, as Doctor Williams says: "If there were a possibility, or use, in a universal language in which mankind could convey their thoughts irrespective of the sound of the symbols, the Chinese seems the best fitted for it;" is, in fact, he might have said, the only one fitted for it. This fitness struck the Count, chiefly because it led up to one of those paradoxes in which a French writer delights. Chinese possesses no grammar, as Westerners understand the word, its place being taken by what sinologues call "position;" very much, in short, as is the case in English. Just as there is, from the point of view of both men and bears, a very radical difference between "men kill bears," and "bears kill men," so there is in the corresponding

Chinese. A Chinese character can belong to any part of speech; so that when one, what we should usually consider a noun, immediately precedes another it becomes an adjective, or, what is essentially the same thing, a noun in the possessive case; just as we say "a gold ring," "a jade base." The construction of Chinese sentences being so simple, the Count considered that they might pass current throughout the world (as, indeed, they might, and possibly may) but for the complicated shapes of the characters. For these he proposed to substitute a series of groups formed by combinations of the first four numerals, as thus :

Chinese (Pekinese)	Wo	ming	zhih	pu	lai
Comte de Lauture	2,2343	2,23433	2,44442	2,12	2,341
English	I,	me	next	day	no, not come

In this way he claimed (this was the paradox he was working up to) that "any European might enter into communication with a people whose language he neither speaks nor reads." His path, however, was beset with brambles. Even in the very simple sentence given above, the Chinese word "ming" only means "next," in this particular phrase "ming zhih," "to-morrow;" ordinarily, it signifies "brightness."

Nevertheless, to the Comte de Lauture's fanciful suggestion is largely due the present actual method of telegraphing in Chinese. The Count employed, as has been seen, combinations of the first four numerals to represent his Chinese characters and be the vehicle for transmitting them. Ten years after the appearance of his brochure, a Monsieur Viguier, of the Chinese Maritime Customs, published, in 1874, the scheme which, when the Tientsin-Shanghai line was opened, in December, 1881, was found to form the method by which messages were sent. It has been seen that Chinese characters are arranged in Chinese dictionaries under two hundred and fourteen radicals, which follow one another according to the number of their strokes. Monsieur Viguier took the seven or eight thousand characters in most common use, and, arranging them by this system, placed against the first one the number 0001, against the second 0002, and so on. It will be evident that, by using all the ten numerals, from 0 to 9, he could, in this way, make 9,999 groups of four figures each: that is, could represent 9,999 characters.

When the "New Code for Chinese Telegrams" appeared, it was found that a total of 7,689 characters was considered sufficient; but the last edition of the Code published, contains a supplementary list of 599, bringing the number of Chinese words that can be telegraphed up to 8,288. The answer, then, to the question with which we started, "How do you telegraph in Chinese?" is this: "By means of an open cypher code, in which every character is represented by a group of four figures."

Of course, this system supposes that every sender and receiver of a telegram is provided with a copy of the Code, and that the sender, at all events, knows how to find a word under its radical. As, roughly speaking, nearly eight per cent., or more than one-thirteenth, of the characters are not easily assigned to any particular radical; as each copy of the Code costs twenty cents—a consideration to your cheeseparing Chinaman—and as Carlyle's ill-natured dictum about people and fools holds good as much in China as elsewhere, it is not to be expected that telegraphy in China has become, as yet, of very general use. The officials telegraph a great deal; but in their case the manipulating of the figures is done by the telegraph clerks, so they don't mind. Imagine what an infinitude of trouble there would be in England, if every one not only, as now, could telegraph in code, but was obliged to so telegraph! A better parallel would be, if the only means of sending a telegram in England were by looking up in, say Routledge's edition of "Nuttall's Pronouncing Dictionary," each word, and by writing in the message form instead of it, the number of the page, of the column, and of the line, in which that word occurred!

Still, what alternative has the Chinaman? One advantage of his system is that a secret message can very easily be sent. As the instructions in his Code Book tell him, all he has to do is to add or subtract a number, or a series of numbers, agreed on beforehand between him and his correspondent, and the cypher is complete. One disadvantage—apart from the unavoidable clumsiness of the whole arrangement—it possesses, is that the different cable companies have agreed to consider a group of three figures as one word, so that if his message had to pass over a foreign line, he would have to pay double for it. This was originally intended to be the case with his own Administration

—I have quite forgotten to say, that it was the Danish Great Northern Telegraph Company that acted as foster-mother to the young Chinese Administration, and supplied it with rules—and to meet the difficulty, an alternate method of telegraphing was proposed, by means of combinations of the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet taken three at a time. That is, the first Chinese character (the word for "one") could be written either 0001 or AAA, the second 0002 or AAB, and so on. By this method—as the curious in such matters will easily ascertain—17,576 characters could be represented.

The Chinese Administration, however, thought better of their design to make Chinamen pay at the rate of three figures to the word, and so the alphabetical system became useless in China. And it was, from the beginning, useless outside China, because the cable companies had laid down the somewhat arbitrary rule that, though they would take combinations of figures, they would take none of letters that formed no recognised word in any of the leading European languages.

One remedy for this hardship forms, in fact, a new mode of telegraphing. It is the substitution for the four-figure groups at present used, of a selection of words from the eight languages allowed for code messages in the Far East—English, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Japanese, and Latin. For simplicity's sake, they might be words of four letters only, since these eight languages could easily supply the nine thousand or so required. English words, for example, ABED, ZONE, should be chosen by preference, since every clerk at the now numerous telegraph stations in China can, at all events, read English. If these did not suffice, French terms should be called in, and after them Latin. The objection to the arrangement is that it would require a Chinese sender to learn the order of the English alphabet, and, perhaps, the proper way of forming English letters. But to a Chinaman accustomed from infancy to learn long and almost meaningless—in infancy, quite meaningless—lists of words by heart, and to commit to memory the complicated forms of thousands of characters, our alphabet would be child's play. I said "perhaps" to learn to write our letters. For in the earlier edition of the Chinese Code, which gave an arrangement by letters, the compilers had printed, at the top of every page, the alphabet, and under

each letter a Chinese character which was supposed to represent its sound. Few of these were, indeed, more than the merest approximations. E and U were exactly reproduced, R sufficiently well for an Englishman, and P and T for an Irishman; but some of the others were very much out of it. X was represented by the sh sound in hush, H by the ch of church, W was read hu, J, zhan, while for Z the compiler could get no nearer than tê, a sound we cannot get near at all. Still, the characters were really only signs; and, as such, would have served their purpose, doubtless, had not the easier alternative of using numerals driven them from the field.

But what we are engaged on is less Chinese telegraphy as it might be, than Chinese telegraphy as it is. I have tried to show how a Chinaman, telegraphing with the means at present at his disposal over foreign lines, is at a disadvantage as far as the cost is concerned. In China itself this difficulty has been met and guarded against. The charge for Chinese telegrams passing entirely over Chinese wires is exactly one-half the charge for foreign telegrams similarly circumstanced. This regulation, regarded from the point of view of foreigners, changes aspect the more it is looked at, like the question at which end a cheroot should be smoked. At first sight the rule appears reasonable; for a Chinaman, as we have seen, is handicapped by having to use, as it were, two cypher words for each character. Over Chinese lines, however, four figures count nowadays as only one word, so that the Chinaman is on the same footing as a European, who, in his turn, is handicapped by having to pay twice as much. The proceeding now seems to savour of protection; but a little more experience shows that matters are not so unequal, since, where an Englishman writes Shanghai as one word, a Chinaman is obliged to write it in two, as Shang-hai. To telegraph "British Consul, Tientsin," three words, would require six, if not seven, Chinese characters. The Chinese language, however, can be as concise as the best telegraphic English; and, on the whole, the regulation would distinctly favour the Chinese if it were not for this difficulty of the address—for all addresses must be paid for. That, it may be thought, could easily be got over by the device, common enough now in England, of registering it beforehand at the different telegraph offices. The

Chinese Administration did, indeed, at first adopt the scheme in its European form by allowing two characters to be registered as an address; but they have since largely deprived it of its usefulness by insisting that five characters at least must be employed, in addition, it would seem, to the name of the station.

Other rules and regulations affecting the cost of telegrams in China are these. The minimum length of a telegram—including the address—is taken at seven characters; that is to say, the least number of words a sender will be charged for is seven. He may write less, but he will have to pay all the same; just as in England, in the old shilling telegram days, you paid a shilling whether your message consisted of one word or of twenty. If the sender, or receiver, of a Chinese message cannot understand it in its code, or four-figure form—an extremely probable circumstance—he can get it transliterated by the telegraph-clerks for an additional payment. If the sender has not spaced out his telegram into fours, but has written the figures continuously, then three figures will be taken as one word, and the message charged at foreign (double) rates. He may write his four-figure groups either in Chinese numerals or in foreign; but he must introduce no foreign letters, at the risk of being charged double.

The rest of the rules are, in the main, a translation from those of the Great Northern Company. One or two are indigenous. Credit is only to be given to Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of the Foreign Office, Tartar Generals, Viceroys, and Governors in the provinces, and Ambassadors, or Ministers of Legation. Apparently this rule, which was originally issued in 1881, became abused, for Li Hung-chang had subsequently to call the attention of officials to it, and insist on the prepayment of messages by all except the privileged few. The Administration will not transmit any telegram which is seditious, libellous, or calculated to do harm, though they remark, somewhat naively, that if the message is in cypher, and so unintelligible, they will forward it, but must decline to take the consequences. Office hours are, in the spring and summer, from seven a.m. to nine p.m., and in autumn and winter from eight a.m. to ten p.m. These hours, though easier than in the Great Northern Company, are not always rigidly adhered to. I called one afternoon at a certain

station, and was shown by the operator over the premises, which being then new, were still clean and neat. They consisted of two or three small courts, a garden with a little pavilion; a reception-room, and the operator's own office and quarters. These operators have been trained, most of them, at Tientsin or Shanghai, at schools to which admission is obtained by open competition. Some, however, are cadets educated in America. Here and there a foreigner, almost always a Dane, and sometimes an ex-officer of the Danish army, is stationed to give advice and assistance in repairing and working the lines, which have been, nearly without exception, laid by him, or his fellow-countrymen—often at considerable personal risk. But I am forgetting my operator. He showed me his instruments, and gave me the copy of the rules from which I have just been quoting. I ventured to remark that he was not very busy; to which he agreed, observing that he found the place duller, but very much healthier, than Shanghai, or, indeed, than America. The next morning about half-past eleven, I met a foreign friend coming away from the telegraph office in some excitement. When he grew calm enough to be coherent, he said that he had taken his telegram, too important to entrust to a casual coolie, to the station himself. He got there at eleven, and finding no one about walked straight into the office. There was no one there either, but he noticed a half-open door for which he made. Climbing some stairs he found himself in the operator's bedroom, where lay the operator, sleeping calmly, almost benignly. The foreigner coughed; the operator awoke. The foreigner produced his watch and the telegram. The operator took in the whole situation, and proved more than equal to it. He waited till his indignant visitor had paused for breath, then said slowly and distinctly: "You'd better git chop chop; I've taken measles." That was some years ago, and nowadays, though they do not speak American quite as well, they get up earlier. Indeed, if the wires would not break quite so often, and if some less clumsy method of transmission could be devised, there would be little to complain of now in Chinese Telegraphy.

A FORGOTTEN WORTHY.

IT is curious to observe by what accidental, and often trivial, circumstances the

names of some men are handed down to posterity, and with what unexpected associations the fame of others becomes involved. The name of Dr. Guillotin is for ever associated with the ghastly apparatus that he invented; but by which—popular legend notwithstanding—he did not meet his death. "Hobson's choice" has immortalised the Cambridge carrier on whom Milton wrote a solemnly jocular epitaph. The "Diverting History of John Gilpin," although at first published anonymously, and, when acknowledged, cold-shouldered by its author, has yet carried the name of William Cowper into many hundreds of homes, where the poet's serious and more ponderous works are unknown. Jonas Hanway was a traveller and a philanthropist. He wrote volumes of travels to places so diverse as St. Petersburg and Portsmouth, Astrachan and Kingston-on-Thames. He founded the Marine Society, which still pursues its beneficent career of rescue, and helped largely in the establishment of the Foundling Hospital. But, so far as he is remembered at all, he is only known as the first man who walked the streets of London with an unfurled umbrella, and as the determined foe of that popular beverage—tea.

Hanway was born at Portsmouth in 1712. He served an apprenticeship to business at Lisbon, and in 1743 started from London to take up a partnership in a mercantile house at St. Petersburg. The journey was made by sea, and occupied the greater part of two months. In the autumn of the same year the traveller set out on his long and adventurous expedition to open up a trade between St. Petersburg and Persia by caravan route, the River Volga, and the Caspian Sea.

The book that Hanway wrote, on his return to England in 1750, descriptive of his travels, contains many curious details of Russian trading life and habits. The caravans travelled from St. Petersburg to Moscow at the rate, in the winter, of about forty-seven English miles a day. In summer they made shorter stages. The procession was long and straggling, and much exposed, on the banks of the Volga, to attacks from the Kalmucks. "A hundred carriages," he says, "take up two-thirds of a mile in length, so that, when no horseman is at hand to spread the alarm, the rear might be easily carried off. They have not even a trumpet, horn, or other instrument for this purpose; they trust in Providence, and think any care of this

kind unnecessary, though the neglect has sometimes proved of fatal consequence."

From Tzaritzin, on the Volga, the journey was continued by water to the Caspian Sea. The boats procurable for transport were extraordinary craft. Their decks were loose pieces of the bark of trees, and long strips of bark were nailed over the wide seams to keep the rotten caulking—or "corking," as Hanway spells it—from tumbling out. Pitch and tar were almost unknown, and the boats were kept afloat by a specially-erected baling or scooping apparatus. On the way down, the convoy met the messengers of the Russian Empress, travelling with grapes from Astrachan to the Imperial Court. A box of these grapes made this journey every three days during the season. It was carried by two horses, litter-wise, and had to travel twelve hundred miles before reaching its destination.

Hanway was struck by the appearance and nature of the soil about Baku—a place which, in recent times, has become the centre of an immense petroleum industry. "If a cane," he says, "or tube even of paper, be set about two inches in the ground, confined and closed with earth below, and the top of it touched with a live coal, and blown upon, immediately a flame issues, without hurting either the cane or the paper, provided the edges be covered with clay, and this method they use for light in their houses, which have only the earth for the floor; three or four of these lighted canes will boil water in a pot; and thus they dress their victuals."

Hanway returned to England from Russia, travelling overland, in 1750, and, having made a fortune sufficient for his modest needs, he lived contentedly upon it, and betook himself to literature. His first production was a bulky account of his travels, of which several editions were sold. In London he very soon became a conspicuous figure by his introduction of the umbrella as part of the outdoor equipment of a gentleman. Before this time, the use of this article was confined to women, and it was considered effeminate in a man to uplift the cumbersome erection. In the "Female Tatler" of the twelfth of December, 1709, there is a satirical notice that "The young gentleman belonging to the Custom House, that for fear of rain borrowed the umbrella at Will's Coffee House in Cornhill, of the Mistress, is hereby advertised that, to be dry from

head to foot on the like occasion, he shall be welcome to the maid's pattens." Hanway introduced umbrellas of pure silk, lighter than had formerly been used, and, despite the jeers and gibes of the street-boys, and especially of the chairmen, who saw their craft in danger, succeeded in bringing them into general use.

Soon after his return from Russia, Hanway wrote several pamphlets on the Naturalisation of the Jews, a measure that he strongly opposed, and in 1756 he published his "Journal of Eight Days' Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston-on-Thames." To a second edition of this work, published the following year, he added his "Essay on Tea, considered as pernicious to Health, obstructing Industry, and impoverishing the Nation." This was no new doctrine. The use of tea had been attacked by a Dutch writer so early as 1695, and a few years later by a German physician, Dr. Cohausen. Only nine years before Hanway published his "Essay," John Wesley had printed a pamphlet entitled, "A Letter to a Friend concerning Tea," in which the author says that tea impairs the digestion, unstrings the nerves, involves waste of money, and induces symptoms of paralysis—a truly formidable indictment. A certain good lady, a disciple of Hanway, Lady Dorothy Bradshaigh, endowed, about 1760, an almshouse near Wigan, and one of her rules was: "I do positively forbid the inhabitants of the house to use any foreign tea known by the names of Bohea and Green, and if any of them persist in drinking it, or expending money for that purpose, they shall be dismissed. Those who can afford to indulge themselves in an article so unnecessary and expensive, so destructive both to time and health (the tea such persons must drink being a sort of poison), I shall not allow them to be proper objects of this charity."

Hanway's book made some stir. Dr. Johnson reviewed it in the "Literary Magazine," and, shameless tea-bibber that he was, naturally trod heavily on the author's anti-Bohea theories. With reference also to the "Eight Days' Journey," the Doctor remarked that "Jonas acquired some reputation by travelling abroad; but lost it all by travelling at home." Goldsmith reviewed the "Essay" in the "Monthly Review," and laughed at the attack on the tea-pot. "The suppression of this dangerous custom," Hanway had written, "depends entirely on the example of ladies of rank in this country . . . some,

indeed, have resolution enough in their own houses to confine the use of tea to their own table, but their number is so extremely small, amidst a numerous acquaintance I know only of Mrs. T., whose name ought to be written out in letters of gold." Upon this, Goldsmith quietly remarks: "Thus we see how fortunate some folks are. Mrs. T. is praised for confining luxury to her own table; she earns fame and saves something in domestic expenses!" Mindful of his earlier experiences as a practising physician, Goldsmith condemns with professional gravity and importance some of the medical theories expounded by Hanway in his book. "The reader may judge," says the "Monthly" reviewer, in conclusion, "which will be most conducive to either mental or bodily health, the watery beverage of a modern fine lady, or the strong beer and stronger waters of her great-grandmother."

It was about this time that Hanway took part in the establishment of that noble charity, the Marine Society, which has supplied our Navy and Mercantile Marine with so many thousands of trained sailors, rescued as boys from the miseries and perils of the streets. A portrait of Jonas, painted by Edward Edwards, hangs in the present committee-room of the Society. Hanway also took a great interest in the Foundling Hospital, and founded in London a Magdalen Hospital.

The "caccëthes scribendi" now fairly possessed the philanthropist, and, during a long course of years, Hanway wrote many books, and still more pamphlets, on every conceivable subject. In 1760, stimulated probably by the production, in the preceding year, of Townley's famous farce, "High Life Below Stairs," he attacked, in a brace of pamphlets, the absurd and oppressive custom of feeing, or giving "vails" to, servants. Two years afterwards the value of his philanthropic efforts was recognised by the Prime Minister, Lord Bute, who appointed him one of the Commissioners for victualling the Navy. Jonas now wrote more than ever; but always having the good of his fellow-creatures in view. He wrote on the "Uses and Advantages of Music," "Meditations on Life and Practical Religion," "An Account of the Society for the Encouragement of British Troops in Germany and North America," "Advice to a Daughter, on her going to Service," "The Christian Officer," and many other similar subjects. He took up the cause of the

poor little chimney-sweepers, and brought some of their cruel employers to book.

In 1774 he issued, in two thick volumes, a work on "Virtue in Humble Life," and in the following year a large quarto on "The Defects of Police, the Causes of Immorality, etc." A list of his writings in the following years would only weary the reader. Until his death he remained an indefatigable scribbler, and wrote on a great variety of subjects, principally religious and social. In 1783 we get a glimpse of him, at a dinner party, in Madame D'Arblay's "Diary." She describes him as "very loquacious, extremely fond of talking of what he has seen and heard, and would be very entertaining, were he less addicted to retailing anecdotes and reports from newspapers." In 1786 his health broke down, and on the fifth of September, having put on a fine ruffled shirt, and disposed of some small personal belongings, he had his will read to him, and then gently and calmly died.

SOME NATIONAL LOSSES.

IT is one of the penalties of civilisation that, in its progress, many things highly curious, interesting, and valuable must inevitably be swept away. Every age has its own peculiar drift or tendency—whence arising, it would be difficult to say, but nevertheless, unmistakeable and inevitable. Every person, thing, or institution which may chance to be in opposition to that drift, eventually has to go; and that is why many types of human character, once common, are at this moment as extinct as the dodo, and only known to us through the medium of books and of tradition.

Of the great majority of these, it may be said, in the apt words of Mr. W. S. Gilbert, that, "They'd none of them be missed." They had their origin, and obtained their ascendancy in an age more tolerant of absurdity, and more lenient to the vices of the great than this, when every personage, however exalted, is merely permitted to retain his position by the favour of the public. "I rejoice," said the great Arnold of Rugby to a friend, as they stood to watch the white smoke of a passing railway-train, in the early days of steam-traffic, "I rejoice to think that feudalism has gone by for ever." The speaker did not long survive that utterance; and could he return to earth now, he would surely be amazed to witness the complete and, so

far as this fortunate country is concerned, bloodless revolution which has transformed the social fabric.

First, and foremost, the Fine Lady—in the strict and odious sense of the phrase—has disappeared, it is to be hoped for ever. In this country she never attained the full developement of heartless wickedness which disgraced her sex in France before the Revolution—but she was bad enough. She was a superfine person of whom but few of this generation have happily had much experience; languid, supercilious, insolent, and a veritable caricature of womanhood. She never read anything, or did anything, or said anything sensible. Airs and graces of the most absurd kind were her sole accomplishments. She lived only for homage and admiration, and looked down upon those beneath her as mere clods and worms—too vile even to serve as footstools for her aristocratic feet. Fine ladies we have still, it is true, but surely none who would dare to avow the crass ignorance, the unfeeling selfishness, the overweening vanity which characterised those of sixty or a hundred years ago. As Society in those days not only tolerated, but even made much of her, we may conclude that the fine lady to many worthy people realised their ideal "grande dame." In these levelling days, she would be promptly relegated to the right-about, as a bore and a fool.

The Professional Talker is another extinct type. In more easy-going times, when knowledge was less diffused than it is now, people were content to sit at the feet of some great man, in order to gain information from the streams of eloquence which flowed from his lips. But now, when everybody prefers to read and think for himself, great talkers find but a scanty audience. No Boswell now, it is to be feared, would lie in wait to take down every word which fell from a Johnson's lips. No party of guests would consider it entertaining to listen for hours to the rhapsodies of a Coleridge.

Everybody, nowadays, wants to talk, and nobody cares to listen. The multiplication of newspapers and magazines has rendered it difficult, if not impossible, for even a brilliant talker to throw much new light upon any subject; and it is much to be feared that the first impulse of the irreverent young men of the present day, if they were assailed by the portentous "Sir!" of Dr. Johnson, would be to mutter "Chuck him out!"

The Haughty Nobleman of the good old times, though he survives in the penny novelette so dear to servant-girls, and in the transpontine drama, is, nevertheless, for all practical purposes, extinct. He was a very awful and unapproachable person, who dwelt for the most part in the seclusion of his ancestral halls, far removed from the gaze of the vulgar, and not to be encountered without awe and trembling. He was treated with an amount of obsequious deference, of which, in these days, it is difficult to form any idea. Now, it is only servants and dependents who are expected to say "my Lord" and "your Ladyship" when addressing members of the aristocracy. But less than fifty years ago highly respectable and cultivated people delighted to interlard their conversation with persons of title with "my Lord" and "your Grace." It would be thought caddish in the extreme for people of the same standing to do so now. Lords and ladies have become so mingled with the common herd of late years, that little remains of the halo of splendour which once surrounded them in the popular imagination. Their domestic affairs, their little weaknesses, their peculiarities, are all minutely chronicled in the society papers for everybody to read. Their once rigidly closed mansions are thrown open twice or thrice a week for the inspection of 'Arry from the counter, and 'Arriet from the kitchen. Their parks are the chosen picnic-grounds of the million. They engage—oh, shades of Sir Leicester Dedlock and the Marquis of Steyne!—in every variety of trade and commerce. They compete with Tom, Dick, and Harry for the honours of the cricket-field, the cattle-show, philanthropy, and literature. They are hail-fellow-well-met with everybody, and as affable to the workman with his dinner tied up in a basin, as to the lord of ten thousand acres. The last century Duke who rebuked his Duchess, when for the first and last time she ventured to kiss him, with "Madam, my first wife was a Percy, and she would never have presumed to take such a liberty!" has, it may positively be declared, no descendant in these days.

And what has become of the Poor Relation—the typical Poor Relation upon whom Charles Lamb founded such a charming essay? Years ago, the poor relation was an accepted fact in almost every great house. He sat at a remote corner of the table, never spoke unless he

was spoken to, was careful always to express a preference for the plainest fare, and received the impertinences of the servants with proper submission. But, nowadays, who ever sees, or acknowledges, a poor relation? It is a fact that all families possess such appendages; but where they hide them is a mystery. Of course, the Colonies afford a convenient refuge for social failures, and many at this moment are comfortably established there on incomes granted by their friends solely on condition that they never return to their native shores. Further than this, all is guess-work; but we have good grounds for believing that the march of progress has rendered poor relations no longer humble and meek, but accustomed to hold their heads high, and to dress, when they emerge into society, as well as the best. Consequently, when we meet them in the glittering halls of their wealthy connections, we never suspect that they live up five pair of stairs in a shabby back street in Pimlico, and pick up a precarious subsistence by writing sensational stories and painting fans.

The Boarding-school Miss—the sweet and rather soft young creature in white muslin, whom Lord Byron so ungallantly described as "smelling of bread-and-butter"—where, oh, where can we hope to find her, in these days of High Schools and Girton girls? She blushed whenever she was spoken to; she knew nothing on any useful subject under the sun; she fled from before the face of a young man, and in society she never spoke or wished to speak. Literature, art, science were sealed books to her; albeit she painted on velvet, and played the harp. She hid her pretty face in the depths of an enormous bonnet, and she never dreamt of maintaining her opinions in opposition to those of her father and mother. Slang she never used, because she never heard any; but expressed herself on all occasions in polite-letter-writer English. As to hunting, or playing cricket, or learning to swim, or studying Latin and Greek, such fearful visions of impropriety never visited her even in a nightmare. She had no other wish than, in due time, to marry and jog serenely along the highway of life untroubled by lofty aspirations and unfulfilled aims.

The modern schoolgirl, accustomed to devour every novel that comes out, and kept thoroughly posted up in all the events of the day, can hardly realise such a benighted

existence. But it is nevertheless the fact that sixty years ago there were girls who considered it unfeminine to read a newspaper.

Vanished also is the great lady who made a parade of literary tastes at a period when female education was practically nil, and kept a "salon," at which all the noted men of the day were expected to attend to pay abject homage to the hostess. Lady Holland and Lady Blessington would find their glory considerably curtailed, could they revisit the sphere they once adorned.

Nothing more clearly shows the astounding revolution which has taken place in society, than the treatment now accorded to men of genius by the great. Instead of being looked down upon as a mere Grub Street hack, entertained only on sufferance and with the distinct understanding that he should pay for his entertainment by his wit, the modern novelist, artist, or poet only consents to sit at a nobleman's table on terms of perfect equality, and would not tolerate the patronising insolence of a Lady Holland for one moment. He expects that his wife and daughters shall also be included among the guests; having more self-respect than the literary men of former generations, who thought it no shame to leave their families to mope in dull back parlours, while they themselves were being paraded as tame lions for the amusement of some great man's friends. Those who marvel that the "salon" as an institution has never enjoyed more than a temporary success in this country, fail to remember the enormous hold which family ties possess upon the English nation. The "salon" is only possible where the men habitually go to seek amusement apart from their womankind. A hostess in this country may, indeed, desire to gather at her house only the most learned and celebrated men of the day; but, if she invites all the leading poets, writers, artists, and so forth, she must also be prepared to have her house inundated by the—to her—uninteresting crowd of their female relatives: their wives, their sisters, their cousins, and their aunts. So, like a wise woman, she abandons the vain attempt to pose as a leader of thought; though probably not without a sigh for the good old days when literary men went out alone to enjoy themselves, and their wives dutifully stopped at home to make their shirts, like Mrs. Carlyle.

The Heavy Father, with the awful temper and the gouty toe, who played such a

prominent part in the domestic history of days gone by, turning his sons out of doors, heaping curses upon his daughters, pummelling importunate creditors, and generally "raising Cain," as the Americans say, is also gone—or going. It is not that there are not plenty of tyrannical old men with bad tempers now, who would like to be bullies if they could; but the conditions are changed. Young people have very clear and exact ideas of their rights now, and will not submit to be sworn at and disinherited for trifling offences; while the nearest magistrate is the refuge of dependents who may have to complain of personal ill-usage. Papa may rave and stamp, forbid this marriage, or disown that son; but in nine cases out of ten his young people only laugh at him, and the Married Woman's Property Act stares him in the face if he attempts to unjustly seize the possessions of his wife. He finds himself so hemmed in by restrictions in every quarter that, perhaps, more than any other, he has reason to regret the days when an Englishman's house was literally his castle, and he was at liberty to ill-treat those about him as much as he chose, being not only uncensured but actually justified by public opinion.

And if the Heavy Father is threatened with extinction, so also is that peculiar product of his genius, the Model Son—the meek, deferential young man who treated his father with the utmost respect, calling him "sir," and reverencing his words as those of an oracle. The Model Son, when at home, was always at hand to render service to his father, to accompany him in his walks, to assist him in his correspondence, to help him to fight his numerous battles, and to do the agreeable to his friends. Abroad, he dutifully kept his father informed of all his movements, sending home sheets of careful caligraphy, and putting down all expenditure for the inspection of the paternal eye. The Model Son never thought of marrying save when and whom his father pleased, and cheerfully accepted red hair, lameness, and a squint, if by so doing he could add a handsome property to the family estate. Always and everywhere he was the very pattern and mirror of sons; and if he could come back to hear the irreverent youth of the present day address their fathers with, "I say, governor, you're a brick!" I fear he would think we were a race of sadly degenerate beings—that Model Young Man!

CONFessions OF A CARETAKER.

A SERIAL STORY.

By "RITA."

Author of "*Dame Durden*," "*Darby and Joan*,"
"*My Lord Concile*," etc.

CHAPTER XXV.

"WHEN THE SEA GIVES UP ITS DEAD."

I suppose Miss Kate was firmer than I imagined possible, or else enjoyed her woman's prerogative of saying "No," too much to give in, for she remained firm on the subject of that probationary year, and, to my surprise, told me on the day succeeding our conversation, that she was going to return to Templecombe at the end of the week—Friday or Saturday.

It eventually became Saturday; and on the Friday, about dusk, she and Mr. Tresyllion came in from a shopping expedition, laden with toys and parcels for the boys, and told me to bring them some tea in the library.

I thought they both looked a little more grave and sad than was their wont, but put it down to the fact of the coming parting; for Mr. Tresyllion was going to Italy when Miss Kate left town.

I brought in the tea, lingering a little in the pretty, firelit room, with its multitude of flowers, and ferns, and lounges, and knicknacks, and soft, low chairs, and all the feminine surroundings by which Miss Kate had transferred it into what was essentially a "woman's room." Miss Kate had thrown her bonnet and cloak down on a chair. Her pretty hair was all loose and soft about her face. I remember so well seeing Mr. Tresyllion go up to her, and laughingly arrange its picturesque disorder, and then, framing her upturned face in both his hands, bend down and softly kiss the pouting lips.

I closed the door and left them, and was just going down the stairs when a loud peal at the bell startled me.

I went to the front door, expecting to find, as usual, some of the constantly-arriving parcels that marked Miss Kate's expeditions. It was quite dusk, but the light from the gas-lamp showed me a tall figure standing there—a man's figure. I could not see the face. A wide, slouched hat hid it from my sight; but a voice, a familiar voice greeted me by name, and with a sudden shock of fear and horror, I staggered back against the door-post as the visitor lifted his hat and showed me the face of my master—Mr. John Carruthers.

For a moment or two I really didn't know what I said, or did. Everything seemed to be whirling round me, and the buzzing in my ears rendered his words quite unintelligible.

"Is your mistress at Templecombe or here?" he kept repeating; and at last I stammered out that she was here, but that we were to have left on the morrow.

He strode through the hall; but I rushed after him and kept him back a moment or two, while I poured out a flood of incoherent explanations.

"Oh, sir, pray let me prepare my mistress," I implored. "You know we all thought you were—were shipwrecked, and all those months no word—and—and, oh, sir, think of the shock, so sudden, so unexpected, so—"

"You don't say so—joyful," he said, looking sternly at me; and no doubt I did seem rather flurried and flustered. "Don't trouble your head, Jane. Joy never kills; and I can break the news of my own escape from death better than any one else. Where is your mistress?"

"In the library, sir," I said, hopelessly. I could only trust he would not find her in Mr. Tresyllion's arms, or sitting at his feet on a stool by the fire, as she so often did.

He reached the door, and I followed, trembling. But even as his hand was on the handle, he turned round and made a sign to me.

"Go in first," he said. "Say some one—a friend—with news of her husband wishes to see her."

He drew aside, and I knocked and opened the door. Miss Kate was sitting at the little tea-table. Mr. Tresyllion was standing by the fireplace, tea-cup in hand, his back to the leaping flames, his face with its usual look of bright and gay content turned erquiringly to me.

"Why, Jane, what's the matter?" he said. "Have you seen a ghost? You look quite scared!"

I closed the door sharply, wondering whether his voice had reached the watcher outside.

"Oh, Miss Kate," I cried, in a stifled way. "Oh, my dear—my dear. Can you be strong—be brave—just for a little while? You must act, you must. There's no help. For your own sake; for your children's sake. Oh, Miss Kate, don't look like that. How am I to tell you!"

The white, stony face was pitiful and awful in its tragic misery. She guessed—she knew. I suppose my terror told her

that only one thing could have happened. As for Mr. Tresyllion, I heard the crash of a falling cup, and he was beside her, facing me. I thought that, to my dying day, I should never forget the look that leaped into his eyes.

"For Heaven's sake, woman!" he cried, "speak out. What has happened? Not—not news of—"

The word died off his white lips. He could not speak it.

"Yes," I said, breathlessly, "news of Mr. Carruthers. He is not—not dead."

There was not a word—not a sound. Only, as if by one impulse they turned and looked at each other—such a look. His arms dropped; every muscle in the strong young frame seemed to relax. He was like a dead man standing there, and, for a moment, I felt more fear for him than for her.

Then came a low, faint cry. She moved blindly, helplessly to me, like a hurt child.

"Who is it?" she said, in a hoarse whisper. "Who—told you?"

"Oh, my dear!" I cried, and caught her in my arms as she swayed suddenly forward. "I must say it—I must tell you! Oh, Miss Kate! be strong—be brave. After to-day it doesn't matter if—if you do break down; but not now—not to-night. He, your husband, is here."

"Here!"

I felt the shudder that ran through the slight young frame. She drew back and looked at me.

"Here? Do you mean to say in this house—near me—now?"

"Yes," I said, "and you must try and seem glad—or—or content. You must! Oh, Miss Kate, remember he knows nothing—nothing; and it is only six months—"

"Six months," she said, "only six months. Do you hear, Rex? I said it was too soon to be glad—that you were too impatient."

Then her voice broke; all the life and light went out of her eyes as the flame of a lamp extinguished. Like a stone she fell to the floor at my feet—just as, with a sudden, impatient wrench, the door was flung open by John Carruthers.

I have but an indistinct memory of what happened then. I think Mr. Tresyllion stood aside, his face white, and set in stern resolve, his eyes resting on the little figure that we had lifted to the

couch—the figure over which another man bent in imploring anguish, blind and deaf to all else, save that Fate had restored her to his arms.

If it was terrible to me—only a looker-on at the tragedy—what must it have been for the two concerned in it?

"Heaven help them! Heaven pity them!" I prayed over and over again, as I bent over my poor, unconscious young mistress, and tried to second her husband's endeavours to restore her senses.

Not that I thought it anything but cruel kindness to do so, knowing full well to what misery she must awaken.

Ah, how sorry I felt for them all! What a wretched, hopeless business it all looked!

And yet, paramount in my mind, and more important than even their happiness, seemed the desirability of concealing the real facts of the case from Mr. Carruthers. He had not as yet seemed to notice Mr. Tresyllion's presence; he was too much concerned about his wife. But after a while she gave signs of returning consciousness, and I glanced in alarm at the quiet figure, with its face set in such stern and hopeless misery.

If he would only have left the room, or moved, or made any sign! But no; he just stood there as if turned to stone, and indifferent to anything that might happen. At last Miss Kate opened her eyes and sat up. She heard her husband's rapturous words; she saw him kneeling there by her side, great tears rolling down his cheeks; his voice speaking out her name in broken, breathless accents. He told her of his marvellous escape, of perils, dangers, and difficulties; and she listened, white and trembling, and with her great eyes, strained and terrified, fixed upon his face.

And then, quite suddenly, Mr. Tresyllion seemed to recover himself, and, as Mr. Carruthers rose to his feet at last, he came forward with extended hand, and in a strange, hoarse voice, spoke out congratulations on his return.

Mr. Carruthers did not seem to think it strange that he should be there, or to notice anything amiss with him. Perhaps he was too excited and upset himself. For my part, I can only say I was thankful when I saw Mr. Tresyllion take up his hat, and, with some incoherent speech about not intruding any longer, leave the room, giving neither look nor hand-clasp to Miss Kate. I followed him out; but when he

got to the hall door, he stood for a moment leaning against it as if strength had failed him.

"Oh, good Heaven!" he panted, suddenly. His hand passed to his heart as if to still its pain. "How can I bear it; how can I lose her—now?"

I summoned up courage then, and approached.

"Sir," I said, "Mr. Tresyllion, oh, don't give way. Think of her. It is ten thousand times worse for her than for you."

"I suppose it is, Jane," he muttered, hoarsely. "Oh, what have we done to deserve this devil's trick of Fate?"

I stood there quite silent, not knowing what to say or do. Presently his hands dropped, and he turned his face to me. So white and haggard was its misery that I could scarcely keep back the tears as I looked at him.

"I can't think—I can't reason yet," he said. "But I must see her again. I can't leave her like this. You must help me, Jane."

The livid, deathly hue of his face, the more than mortal anguish in his eyes, held me dumb and powerless. I had looked on sin, and sorrow, and suffering in my time; but I had never seen, and I pray I never may see again, any human creature look as Mr. Tresyllion looked that night.

"Oh, sir," I entreated, feebly, "don't try and see her any more. Write, if you wish; but don't, for both your sakes, have any more meetings. You are parted; nothing can help or alter that. Why make it harder?"

He looked at me in a bewildered way, as if he had not heard or understood what I had said.

"Poor little Kate," he muttered, hoarsely. "She was quite right. I was in too great haste to be happy. Would to Heaven I might die to-night!"

His hands groped feebly for the latch, and I—my eyes blind with tears—pushed it back and opened the door, and saw him stagger out into the cold, night air."

Then I closed the door and went back into the dim hall and sat down there, trying to think clearly and calmly over all that had taken place.

CHAPTER XXVI. "GOOD-BYE—"

NOT long after Mr. Tresyllion had left, I was summoned again to the library.

"Your mistress is very feverish and

hysterical," explained Mr. Carruthers. "I think you had better get her to bed. I'm afraid the shock was too sudden. It appears that my letter, explaining everything, has not been forwarded from Templecombe."

I saw he suspected nothing, and wondered how long he would remain in that "ignorance" which certainly was "bliss" in his case. Miss Kate followed me out of the room on her husband's arm, walking as a sleep-walker might, and apparently too dazed and stupefied as yet for actual suffering.

But it came soon enough, as I knew it would, and must, and I had to sit there by her side through the long hours of that night, listening to her low, plaintive moans; or watching those miserable, haunting eyes staring blankly at the wall or the firelight, and unconscious now of my presence, or her own peril.

A time so terrible followed, that even now I dread to look back upon it. A time when mad images of fever took the place of all sense and memory; when day followed day, and night succeeded night; and still it seemed there was no change or improvement. And every night, as darkness fell, and the lights were lit in the straw-covered street, a solitary figure would pace to and fro on the opposite pavement—waiting, waiting, with more than mortal patience, till I could slip down and give the news, which, alas! was no news. And sometimes at midnight, or in the quiet morning hours, I could hear that step still echoing on the deserted pavement. And sometimes, too, it seemed to me that she heard it, and recognised it, or felt the strange magnetism of that fateful presence, for she would start up in the bed, her eyes wide and strained, as if seeking to see something invisible; the babbling, feverish words stilled and silenced in the eagerness of listening. Then she would sink back once more on the pillows, going over and over again the same weary, senseless round of words—but never by one of them betraying the secret that was locked in her passionate heart.

Mr. Carruthers was as miserable and anxious as man could be, and about as helpless in a sick-room as men usually are. We had the best doctors, the best nurses—everything that money could procure, or affection suggest. But with it all the dreadful battle had to be waged between youth and strength, and death; and nothing could hasten or shorten the combat.

It was indeed, as I said before, a terrible time. But at last youth and strength got the best of it, and she was pronounced out of danger.

That night—the first time for many a long day—I put on my bonnet and shawl and went out, and met Mr. Tresyllion, and we walked round and round the square beyond, I trying to cheer him as best I could, and persuade him to leave England, and go away for a time, until the first smart and pain of this terrible blow was over.

I might as well have spoken to the iron railings by which we stood.

"I will see her again. I must—if I die for it," he said, doggedly and determinedly. And I sighed as I looked at the changed young face, haggard now, and with terrible lines and shadows blotting out the light and life of its beautiful youth. "How can I leave her like this?" he went on, as I still persisted in my weak entreaties. "A month ago, my promised wife; and now not a word—a look—a hand-clasp to bridge this gulf of division. Do you fancy I could have lived through all these days and nights if it hadn't been just for that hope—the hope I might see her again—look once more into the dear, brown eyes, hear the sweet, remembered voice saying my name? That's all I want, Jane; all I ask. But I would sooner forfeit life than the hope of it. Life!" and he laughed contemptuously. "What is it to me now? All that made it—all that beautified it—all that gave me a thought of purity, or a throb of joy, has had its death-blow!"

"You don't think of her?" I said.

"Don't I?" he cried, passionately. "How little you know! I can tell by my own pain what hers must be. If I went away when she was weak, suffering, desolate, what would she think?"

"Better that she should think ill of you," I said, "than suffer as she will suffer now."

"She need not suffer," he said, abruptly, then stopped, and looked at my startled face with a sudden, shamed confusion. "I—I mean—" he stammered.

"Hush," I said, "I know what you mean; but if you have any regard for her—for the future—for—for her real happiness, you will not tempt her now."

"Heaven forbid," he said, "that I should do—that. But I think, often, that my pain is beyond human endurance."

The misery and hopelessness in his voice brought the tears to my eyes. To think of that beautiful dream laid waste—to think that the old, weary struggle must begin all over again!

"If I could kill my memory—or myself," he muttered, desperately. "Now go, Jane—go back to your post; but remember, not all the power of men or devils shall keep me from her side when she is well enough to see me. On that I am determined. It may be the last time on earth. I could almost pray that it might. I suppose it will come to putting the seas between us sooner or later! Doesn't it seem a strange thing that the whole of one's life can be wrecked just for the love of one woman—such a little woman, too!" and he laughed bitterly—recklessly.

How strange it sounded in the quiet street! Yet I thought no sob had ever held such pathos, or spoken such despair. Then he drew his hat sharply over his eyes, and left me without another word.

I went back to the house and to my duties there; but my heart was heavy with dread, and not even the new consciousness in my dear's pretty eyes, nor the weak, loving smile she gave me, were of any effect to raise my spirits. I could only think of the misery and the trouble that threatened her, and wonder, in a bewildered, hopeless fashion, what the end of it all would be.

Miss Kate, happily for her, was as yet too feeble to think or feel. She just seemed content to lie still, and be ministered to and waited on, asking nothing, saying nothing. But a week glided by, and she was able to lie on the couch in her dressing-room; and a faint, fitful colour began to replace the waxy paleness in her cheeks. I noted that her eyes were often absorbed and thoughtful, and they had a way of following me about and questioning me that was excessively embarrassing.

At last the evil day came. We were alone, and she was better and stronger than she had yet seemed; strong enough to talk—so the doctor said—and she seemed impatient to put that newly-received permission to the test. I could not evade her any longer. She dismissed the nurse, and bade her take a long spell of rest; and then whispered me to lock the door and come and sit close beside her.

"Tell me all—everything," she said, beseechingly. "Where is he? Does he

know I have been ill? Hasn't he written to me?"

I couldn't resist the pleading in her eyes. I told her how he had been like a sentinel at his post for all these weary weeks; how I had been obliged, even against my better judgement, to slip out from time to time and give him news of her. She listened quite quietly—far too quietly, I thought, for her. It was as if she, too, were framing some desperate resolve, but she gave me no clue to her thoughts that night, nor for many days that followed, each of which brought improved health and strength, though she seemed less than thankful for such gifts. Mr. Carruthers left for Templecombe as soon as she was really on a fair way to recovery, and it was arranged that she should go there also, as soon as the doctor thought her strong enough to bear the journey.

The nurses had left. She was able now to come downstairs to the library, if she wished; but for long she shrank from going into that room, and I know only too well the reason.

At last, one evening she told me she was coming down. On the morrow Mr. Carruthers was expected, and, in all probability, we should leave town at the end of the week.

I go back now to my diary for the events of this night—a night destined to live in my memory as long as my life lasts.

It was about eight o'clock, as near as I can remember, when Miss Kate left her dressing-room. She looked very white and fragile, I thought, as I followed her down the staircase; and her loose gown of white cashmere, lined and bordered with white fur, seemed to increase the delicacy and youth of her appearance.

A bright fire burned in the grate. The couch was drawn up near it, and she nestled down amidst the soft bearskin rugs with a sigh of fatigue. I noticed that she was trembling greatly.

I lit the lamps and drew down the blinds.

"Would you like me to stay with you, Miss Kate?" I asked her.

She looked up quickly.

"Yes, Jane," she said. "It is rather—lonely."

Her eyes wandered from place to place. How full of memories that room must have been to her! What an embodiment of "the eloquence of silent things"!

I drew a chair up beside the couch and

watched her in silence, and not without fear.

Presently she raised herself on one arm, and, looking straight at me, said quickly: "Jane, I have been all this time making a resolution. It was very hard to do—but I have done it at last. I am going to tell John everything."

I looked at her in amazement. "Oh, Miss Kate," I cried, "is that wise? You will spoil all his peace of mind for ever."

"Better that," she cried, passionately, "than deceit and hypocrisy. I will tell him the whole pitiful, miserable story. After all, he is my husband; he is bound to help me; to protect me from—myself. For it has come to that. I daren't trust myself, Jane. I am too weak where Rex is concerned. I only know I love him—and I could just as easily tear the heart from my breast as change my feelings. Oh," and she sobbed helplessly, weakly, as one in mortal terror. "Oh, Jane, Jane, if only I had died—if only I had died! Why has Heaven raised me up again to go through all this awful suffering? I thought it was over. Surely once in a lifetime is sufficient."

"My dear," I said, pityingly, "we can't tell the why and wherefore of our sufferings here. How often and often I have puzzled about it!"

"Puzzled!" she cried, bitterly, "I have thought and thought till sometimes I fancied I should go mad. It seems as if we spend our youth in desiring experience, and all our after years in regretting it. And one is so—alone—after all. No friendship, no love really reaches deep enough to help us. I was so content with life once; but now it is all fever, unrest, torture. And yet it does not seem as if I had wilfully done wrong. What tears I have shed, Jane! Sometimes it has seemed as if my heart's blood was being wrung out from my burning eyes; and it was all for nothing—all for nothing."

"Oh no, Miss Kate," I answered. "Heaven sends sorrow for our good. It is all part of life's lesson, and we must learn it soon or late."

"I used to think," she said, wearily, "that only physical sensations were real enough to hurt one. How little I knew! Oh, Jane, Jane, I would rather have the worst bodily pain than this awful struggling with my heart and its weakness. It is a fight where I am always worsted; and my strength goes, and goes, and goes. I—I—

it is no use trying now to puzzle out why we met, or why we loved; nothing can alter the fact that we have done both. And because we ought not to have loved—because from the first it seemed wrong, and—and impossible—it only struck its roots deeper, it only spread its arms wider, wider, till the embrace enclosed all life that was worth calling life."

I turned aside to hide the tears that had gathered in my eyes. There was a long silence in the quiet room. Then she lifted her face and wrung her hands together as if in a sudden paroxysm of pain.

"You know, Jane," she went on, suddenly, "I have been quite quiet, quite patient all this time; but I have thought everything out, and have come to this conclusion: I cannot fight my battle any longer. I haven't the strength. I will tell John so, and he must help me. Surely he cannot blame me so very much. I was so young. I—I had not taken life in any way seriously when I married; and no one could have tried harder than I tried to conquer the feeling I had for Rex Tresyllion. But it was all no use—no use. And now I have made up my mind. To-morrow John will be here; to-morrow I will tell him everything. He can decide what he pleases. Perhaps he will think me wicked, ungrateful, false, shallow. I cannot help it. I would sooner be thought the wickedest woman in the world than know myself to be a hypocrite in his house."

"You will lose both men," I said. "The man you love, who can be nothing to you now; and the man who loves you, and whom you are going to put to a test from which even an angel might shrink. Oh, surely, surely you will not do it!"

"I mean to do it," she repeated, resolutely, her pale lips set in something of the stern and cruel lines I had seen so often in Sir Rupert's face. "I can go to papa," she went on presently, "and live abroad with him; and, perhaps, John will let me see the boys—sometimes. They love me, and won't think harshly of me, I know."

I was silent. I could not think of anything to say, being, indeed, too startled and too alarmed at the desperate resolution she had formed.

She had been so quiet all this time—and to think that in her heart she had been planning anything so mad, and useless, and almost cruel!

She sank back again on the pillows and closed her eyes, as if for very weariness. For a few moments the stillness was un-

broken, save for the ticking of the clock, or the fall of the ashes in the grate.

Suddenly she sprang up; her eyes dilated; two bright spots of vivid crimson burning in either cheek; her small hands, so white and wasted now, clasped tight to her heart. "Oh, Jane," she cried, "listen; that is his step outside—there—on the pavement!"

"Nonsense, Miss Kate," I said, impatiently. "There are so many people passing to and fro. How can you tell one step from another?"

"I feel it," she said, quietly. "I know he is there just as surely as I know I live, Jane. I should know it, I believe, if I were lying in my grave, and he bent over the poor dust that once meant—me. Oh, my love—my love!"

I could hear the step; slow, measured, steadily passing to and fro beneath the lighted window. I looked at her as she sat there, her breath coming and going unevenly, the colour paling in her cheeks; her hands still clasped against her throbbing breast.

"I will see him," she said, suddenly. "Go and tell him so, Jane. It will be for the last time, but I must say good-bye—better that pain than the blank, desolate silence of such weeks as these."

I rose from my seat.

"Remember, Miss Kate," I said, warningly, "you are still very weak, and unfit for any agitation. You are doing a very unwise thing, in my opinion."

"Do you think," she said, smiling bitterly, "that life is so dear and precious that I am afraid to risk it? But you may stay here if you like. Perhaps it would be as well. You can tell John, to-morrow, that, as his wife, I remembered what was due to him."

I went out then and opened the front door. Her instinct had not deceived her. Mr. Tresyllion was there. He came up when he saw me, and looked enquiringly into my face.

"Will you come in, sir?" I said, abruptly. "Mrs. Carruthers wishes to see you."

The blood flushed warm and bright to the haggard young face. He looked almost incredulous. "Is it true; do you mean it?" he exclaimed, brokenly.

"Yes, sir. That is my message. Mrs. Carruthers is downstairs for the first time. To-morrow she leaves for Templecombe."

He came in at once; but, as I closed the door, I saw him stagger, and lean against the balustrade of the stairs. I thought how

terribly ill he looked; but I made no remark, only led the way to the library door, and held it open for him to pass through.

"She—she is alone!" he said, in a hoarse, strange whisper. And, knowing the dread in his mind, I hastened to reassure him, adding that Mr. Carruthers was at Templecombe.

Miss Kate was half-lying, half-sitting on the couch; her face white as her gown, and her eyes looking larger and darker than ever in contrast to that waxen pallor.

He seemed to make but one stride, and then was bending over her—her hands clasped tight in his, his eyes devouring every line and feature of the sweet, changed face.

"Oh, Kate!" he cried, and then was silent, save for the laboured breath that seemed to tear at his heart.

She looked up into his eyes, and then—in a passion of sobs and tears, she buried her face in the hands she had wrenched from his grasp. She had overrated her strength, or the shock and surprise of that change in him had been too much for her self-control.

He turned abruptly to me.

"Give her something, for Heaven's sake!" he cried. "I—I can't bear to see her cry."

He moved away to the fireplace, and I saw him lean his head on his folded arms, and stand there in resolute endeavour to retain the self-control so sorely tried.

I gave Miss Kate some sal-volatile, and did my best to urge her to compose herself. For a brief space there was silence; then he turned again, and, seeing she was leaning quietly back on her pillows, he drew near, and seated himself by her side.

I drew back into the darkest corner of the room. Neither of them seemed to notice if I were there or not.

"You are so weak—still," he said. "Perhaps I ought not to have come in. But how could I help it? I have only lived for this moment ever since I knew you were out of danger. Oh, my poor darling—"

"Hush!" she said, sharply. "Don't call me that. I can't be yours again—ever—ever again. I sent for you to tell you—that. I prayed so hard to die, and yet I have had to live—Oh, Rex, don't look like that—you kill me!"

Their eyes met in one long glance, fraught with sharp pain, and tearless misery. So might Eve and Adam have looked their last at Paradise; so might

lost souls look back on the glorious "might-have-beens" of a wasted life.

"Kate," he said, at last, "have you made up your mind—have you thought of what is to become of us now?"

"Yes," she said; "it is only too clear—too plain—you—you must know that yourself, Rex. Our dream is over—nothing remains but to part—to forget, or, if that is not possible, to bear the pain till death or absence kills it out of our hearts."

"I think," he said, in a harsh, strange voice, "that your decision is in itself a death-blow to one of us. How can I forget—how can I live, without you? You have become all and everything to me. You have uprooted every previous object, aim, content, that made up life. As well ask me to cease to breathe, as to forget. I simply cannot do it, so there is no use in making false promises. I know, as well as you do, that I have no claim upon you now, but that doesn't make me love you one whit the less; nor could it, if fifty John Carrutherses stood in my path."

"Don't you think," she said, with a little mirthless smile, "one—is enough? He can part us as effectually as fifty!"

"Oh, Kate," he cried, "don't jest, don't trifle. Remember this is life or death to me. Heaven knows I did not want to love you. I tried my best to put you out of my thoughts, my heart, my life. But it was no use. Did ever Fate play so cruel a trick before?"

"There is no use in railing at Fate now," she said, wearily. "We have to make up our minds to go through an ordeal such as we never dreamt of facing. There is no escape—none."

Once more he looked at her; I saw the warm, bright colour flush her cheeks, and her eyes sink in sudden, shamed confusion.

"No, Rex," she said; "no—no—no! I have thought of that. I knew you would think of it; but I cannot do it. I should never be happy—never for one single moment; though Heaven knows I love you more than any human creature on the face of this earth. But you could not stifle remorse; you would not give me content or peace. I should try you in a thousand ways, and you would grow weary and unhappy too. It would need more than mortal patience to bear with me, and the deepest of deep human love to satisfy me."

"And I would give you both," he cried, with sudden, mastering passion. "Yes, and more than both. Every throb of heart and soul, every dream, every desire! You

might drain my life of all it holds, and I would be content to give it you. You might exact every sentiment that love can give, or passion satisfy, tax patience to its utmost, constancy to the depth and height of its every meaning, and still I would be content to worship you, and ask no reward save—your love. Your love, that was—that is mine, Kate ; deny it if you can !"

He was kneeling beside her, clasping her hands in both his own ; his face ablaze with passionate emotion ; his eyes gazing through tears at her paling face.

"I can't—deny—it," she said ; and her voice grew strangely low and solemn. "To my own eternal misery—I love you."

"Oh, hush," he cried, despairingly. "Don't speak like that. Reproach from you is more than I can bear."

He rose and stood beside her, one hand resting on the scroll of the couch where she lay.

"You will go back," he said, "to your old life, to your husband's arms, to your children's love ; but I—"

There were no words to fill that broken pause. It was eloquent enough of the desolation that the future must hold.

"Never to see you ; never to touch your hand, your lips. Oh, I can't bear it ; I can't face it. I, who looked upon you as my wife, my very own. Oh, love, it is killing me."

A sob burst from him ; the terrible, choking sob wrung from a man's anguish.

She rose and stood before him, pale and trembling.

"Don't," she said, in a low, stifled voice. "If—if you break down, how am I to find strength ? Do you think you suffer less than I do ? No, Rex ; indeed—indeed you don't ; and I am not going back to the life you fancy. I—I could not ; so I have made up my mind to tell John everything—everything ; and then—"

"Then," he said, "there will be one more burdened heart and broken life. What good can that do, Kate ? You won't come to me ; and yet you—in a way—divorce yourself from him."

"I know," she said, desperately. "It seems foolish, no doubt, but I must do it. I feel I could not bear the strain of that double life. With all my faults, Rex, I never was a hypocrite."

"No," he said, "I don't think you were. You always spoke out pretty plainly ; even when it hurt—"

I was looking straight at him while he said these words ; and suddenly I saw his face turn a ghastly, awful hue.

He staggered and almost fell on to the couch, while, with a little cry of terror, Miss Kate threw herself on her knees beside him.

"Rex, dearest ! Oh, Heaven ! what is it ?" she cried, wildly. "Jane—Jane—come here !"

No need to call me. I was at his side as soon as herself. I saw him raise his hand to his throat in a bewildered, feeble way, and I tried to unfasten the close-fitting collar. But even as I did so the colour of his face changed, and a shudder ran through the strong young frame.

Then, with a cry of more than mortal agony—a cry the like of which I pray Heaven I may never hear again—he fell back on the pillows.

CHAPTER XXVII FINIS.

EVEN as I tore open the linen shirt regardless of studs and button, even as I calmly bade Miss Kate fetch the restoratives that I had used so often for herself, I knew it was all no use.

Rex Tresyllion was dead.

Dead in the promise of his youth, in the flush of fame and success, and though there are no such things as broken hearts according to science, I think his was broken that night—broken beneath the strain of misery, the effort at self-restraint, the long, long penance, the bitterness of endured suffering from which there seemed no escape.

Even now—and all this happened many years ago—I can hardly bring myself to write calmly of that awful night ; to speak of Miss Kate's grief.

No ; that is too sacred a thing for strangers to intermeddle with. I can't think of it even now with dry eyes.

We sent for a doctor ; but he could do nothing. I think he called it "aneurism of the heart," or some such grand name ; but what did the name signify ? The fact remained the same. Rex Tresyllion was no more. Life had done its best and its worst for him.

Fortunately, there was no inquest or fuss, because I discovered the doctor who had been attending him, and he gave a certificate as to cause of death.

What passed between Miss Kate and her husband I cannot say. I saw him as he left her room, after hearing the whole pitiful story. I could not, if I tried, describe his face, or the look that, for years after, spoke out his suffering and endurance in the patient eyes.

I don't think he ever blamed her. Indeed, he could not have had the heart to do it, seeing so plainly her suffering—knowing how she had tried to do battle against the feeling that had been destined to wreck two lives, and spoil one.

They both went to Templecombe before the funeral. But I, being left behind, attended it, unknown, and unobserved. As I lingered for one last look at the spot of earth which held all that remained now of that bright, and handsome, and gifted personality I had known as Rex Tresyllion, I saw a dark, veiled figure approach from behind a group of trees.

Some instinct told me who it was. I moved a short distance away, and I saw her stand there beside that open space, till suddenly a paroxysm of grief robbed her of self-command, and she sank down on the damp, cold clay with one long, passionate cry, that only the silence of the grave might hear and answer now.

I stole away, softly and unobserved, wondering a little how it was that memory should suddenly show me, like a lightning flash, that little room in Bruton Street, and the dismay and disorder of glass and china, and the careless grace of a young figure perched upon the table, and looking with laughing eyes at the vexed and handsome face of a woman as he said: "Cross—Pauline!"

Poor Mrs. Cray! I never saw her again, but I know she lives, because of her books; though they changed, like herself, and became gloomy, serious, and metaphysical; so that I gave up reading them long ago—for I really didn't understand them.

Only a few words more about Miss Kate, and then I can consider my "Confessions," such as they are, are over and done with.

Unlike most confessions, they seem to concern other people a great deal more than myself; but, then, the other people have made up the events of my life, and have shaped, and ordered, and affected it so strongly, that I could not write of it without writing of them.

Miss Kate was never the same after that terrible night. She seemed like one turned to stone. She never cried, or complained; she never spoke of her poor young lover. She only moved and looked as if the very springs of her life were maimed and broken, and so I am sure they were.

Mr. Carruthers was just as good to her as ever he had been; very patient—very gentle. I don't think he ever said one word of blame, though I could see what a change the knowledge of that story made in his life, and how it aged him by years; for all that, he never reproached, or complained, or was anything outwardly but the kind and genial gentleman the world had always known. But the deepest wounds bleed inwardly; and, sometimes, when I saw his eyes rest on his wife's changed face, or heard the broken tenderness of some low spoken words, I knew that he suffered keenly as herself, and like herself, without hope or help.

She tried her best, my poor dear, to take up the burden of duty once more; to play her part in her own home; but month by month and year by year it grew harder, and she drooped and faded, and her strength left her, and everything seemed an effort at last; and so a day came when there was no disguising the truth any longer; when she took to her bed, only saying to me:

"Oh, Jane, I am so tired—so tired."

And that was all. And she never complained, nor seemed ever to suffer any pain, but was just—tired; until one day—three years after her ill-fated lover had died—she just fell quietly back in my arms and, with a smile, the first I had seen on her lips since that awful night, looked up in my face and said:

"Good-bye, my faithful old Jane," and went to meet him.

I don't suppose any one who reads this will care to hear any more about me or my affairs, or I might tell them how Tom came home, ill and repentant, and found me out; and how, woman-like, I forgave him, and lived with him for one troubled, toilsome year, when he, too, went "the way of all flesh," and I was again left alone to battle with life and the world.

But I have never wanted for kind friends, or a helping hand, though I am an old woman now, and find my chief pleasure in looking back at the events of my life, and the stories I have learnt, and the people I have known.

But among them all there is not any story so dear to me, in spite of its sadness, or any memory that I love with such faithful love, as the story and the memory of "Miss Kate."

Large Bonuses
Unsurpassed Security.

FOUNDED 1806.

PROVIDENT

LIFE OFFICE

INVESTED FUNDS BONUSES DECLARED
£2,539,609 £2,971,852
50, REGENT STREET, W.
& 14, CORNHILL, E.C., LONDON.

PROVIDENT LIFE OFFICE.

Financial Position.

Assurance Fund	...	...	...	...	...	...	£2,365,270
Deduct	Net Liability under Assurance Transactions						
	at December 31st, 1887	...	...	...	...	...	£1,914,147
	Surplus	...	...	...	...	...	£451,123
Moiety of Profits	reserved						
	until the next Division of						
	Profits in 1893	...	...	...	...	...	£225,561 12 2
Shareholders' Portion	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,804 18 0
Policyholders' Portion	...	...	...	...	...	...	218,756 14 2
	(This sum will yield additions to						
	Policies, payable at death, ex-						
	ceeding £342,038.)						
							£451,123 4 4

Absolute Security.

The Valuation at December 31st, 1887, was based on the safe test of the H^M Tables, and 3½ per cent. interest. The above figures, therefore, without reckoning the liability of the Shareholders, afford to the Assured what is the paramount consideration, namely, Absolute Security.

Claims and Surrenders have been paid since the foundation of the Office in 1806, amounting to ... **£8,459,173**

Equitable Division of Profits.

Bonuses vest immediately they are declared, and may be dealt with as follows:—

1. Added to the Sum Assured.
2. Surrendered for Cash Value.
3. Applied in Reduction of Premiums.

PROVIDENT LIFE OFFICE.

Comparative Statement

As to Policies of Assurance in Nine Offices.

Upon a Policy for £5,000 which has become a Claim, £14,176. 6s. was paid. The same life was also assured in eight other offices, and the Solicitors who received the Claims testified to the fact that the "PROVIDENT" Bonuses were by far the largest.

OFFICE.	Sum Assured.	Total Amount of Premiums Paid.	Bonuses Added by the Office.	TOTAL Amount Received by the Assured.
The Provident Life Office	£ 5,000	£ 10,242	9,176 6 0	£ 14,176 6 0
Office No. 2	3,000	5,463	2,637 1 7	5,637 1 7
" No. 3	3,000	5,673	558 15 7	3,558 15 7
" No. 4	5,000	13,827	7,125 0 0	12,125 0 0
" No. 5	5,000	12,810	3,589 0 10	8,589 0 10
" No. 6	5,000	13,951	8,489 3 4	13,489 3 4
" No. 7	3,000	7,434	794 4 11	3,794 4 11
" No. 8	5,000	16,520	3,366 0 4	8,366 0 4
" No. 9	5,000	13,230	2,136 7 10	7,136 7 10

The Bonuses, added to the sums assured by the eight offices referred to, ranged from 60½ per cent. to as low as 9½ per cent. upon the Premiums received; whereas, in the case of the "PROVIDENT," the Bonus was actually as high as 89½ per cent. upon Premiums received.

This is powerful evidence of the advantage and superiority of the **Bonus System** as adopted by the "PROVIDENT," as well as a proof of the uninterrupted prosperity the Office has enjoyed for upwards of three-quarters of a century.

Half-Credit System.

Applicable only to With-Bonus Policies for the Whole Term of Life (Table A. in Prospectus), and to Lives not exceeding 60 years of age.

Under this system, **one-half the Premium only** is payable during the first 5, 7, or 10 years, at the option of the Assured; the other half-premium remains a charge against the Policy, bearing 5 per cent. interest.

The arrears of half-premium may be paid off at any time, or be deducted from the Sum Assured when the Claim arises.

(Explanatory leaflet may be obtained upon application to the Secretary.)

Liberal Conditions.

The "PROVIDENT" confers, in an exceptional degree, all legitimate advantages the system of Life Assurance can, with safety, command, and which most commend themselves to persons who are about to effect Assurances.

50, REGENT ST., W., & 14, CORNHILL, E.C., LONDON.

PROVIDENT LIFE OFFICE.

Trustees and Directors.

The Right Hon. LORD KINNAIRD.
Admiral Sir GEO. ST. VINCENT DUCKWORTH
KING, Bart., K.C.B.
THOMAS BARNEY, Esq.
WILLIAM SPENCER BEAUMONT, Esq.
ROLAND V. BEVAN, Esq.
Lieut.-General HENRY BRACKENBURY, C.B.
CHARLES F. CUNDY, Esq.

EDWARD JOHN FOSTER, Esq.
JOHN NATHANIEL FOSTER, Esq.
WILLIAM COPLAND JUDD, Esq.
Major DUDLEY DUCKWORTH KING.
WILLIAM PHILIP SNELL, Esq.
WILLIAM HENRY SPENCER, Esq.
Major-General RODERICK MACKENZIE.

SEYMOUR A. BEAUMONT, Esq. (*Managing Director.*)

Actuary and Secretary.

CHARLES STEVENS, Esq.



Advantages.

Absolute Security.

Equitable Distribution of Profits.

Large Bonuses.

Half-Credit System.

(This offers the advantage of a Low Premium
during the Early Years of Life.)

Liberal Conditions.

50, REGENT ST., W., & 14, CORNHILL, E.C., LONDON.